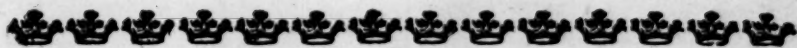


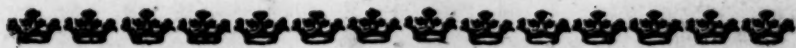
By Congreve



THE
Perplex'd Dutchess:

O R,

Treachery Rewarded.



Price One Shilling.

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THE
Perplex'd Dutcheſs:
OR,
Treachery Rewarded.

Being ſome Memoirs of the Court
of *MALTA*.

In a LETTER from a *Sicilian* Noble-
man, who had his Reſidence there, to
his Friend in *London*.

*The Impious, while they reign in Sin ſecure,
'Cause the Bolt's ſlow, believe no Angry Power ;
But when at laſt th' avenging Stroke is given,
They feel, and then confeſs the Hand of Heaven.*
Haywood's Fair Captive.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near the Oxford-
Arms, in Warwick-Lane. 1728.



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THE

Perplex'd Dutcheſs.

S I R,



OUR last Letter expreſſing a deſire of being inform'd of ſome Particulars relating to our Dutcheſs, I have made it my Buſineſs to ſearch into the moſt ſecret Part of her Hiſtory: and from thoſe pretty deeply intereſted in it, have had the good fortune to become acquainted with Paſſages, which, if they render her Character leſs famous than that of *Fredigoud*, or *Brunehalt* for Cruelty, will equal either of them for Ambition, Avarice, and Deceit. But of that I ſhall leave you to judge, after having examin'd

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the following Account ; the Truth of which I may venture to *Attest* ; as also, that all the Letters here transcrib'd are Genuine, and have neither been diminished nor any thing added to them in the Copies taken from the Originals.

Gigantilla was descended from a Family so obscure, that those whose interest it was to make it appear considerable, having with all imaginable Diligence search'd the Records, cou'd find no name of any Person to whom she cou'd boast herself related. She came very young to Court, and by an inferior Officer (who was since her Advancement made away, lest he should discover the Steps by which she rose) recommended to the Service of a Maid of Honour, with whom she liv'd some Years. But being naturally of an ambitious and aspiring Soul, and Mistress of an uncommon Share of Cunning, she found the way to wind herself into the favour of a great Lady, and became her Companion. She had so well improv'd her time in observing the Behaviour of those above her, that in spite of the Disadvantages of her first Education, every thing she said or did appear'd agreeable ; she now knew how to embellish the Charms she had from Nature, with all the Aids of Art ; in fine, she was ignorant of nothing which those who call themselves of the polite World take a pride to understand ;

stand ; and tho' her Stature is above the ordinary size of her Sex, she has the Address to manage every Motion in such a manner, that while it adds to the majesty of her Deportment, takes away nothing of that sweetness without which no Woman can be agreeable. To do her justice, she is indeed extremely lovely, for tho' her Features are large, answerable to her size and bulk, there is a certain Harmony between them, which added to a most delicate Complexion, gives her Charms which I can inspire you with no better an Idea of, than to say she is a *Grecian Venus*, who you know is always painted very plump, tall, and fair.

Such as she was, however, she attracted a great number of Admirers, and some among them not inconsiderable either for Birth or Riches ; but having the good fortune to be of a Disposition very far from amorous, and knowing there were yet a great many Years between her and those which bring decay of Beauty, she chose to wait in hope of some Offer which might be still more advantageous : and notwithstanding she was continually solicited by some who had a friendship for her, to think with less disdain on those who at present addressed her, and consider'd by every body as the Enemy of her own Interest, in refusing Matches which had so much the appearance of raising her above what

she cou'd in reason expect ; yet did her good Genius stop her Ears to all the Arguments alledg'd to her on this Head ; nor cou'd the Chidings of her Superiors, the Persuasions of her Equals, nor the unceasing Importunities of her sighing Admirers, prevail on her to alter her Sentiments, or inspire in her one tender Wish.

A young Woman who remains for a long time insensible of Love amidst a Crowd of Adorers, is look'd on as a Prodigy, especially in a Court like this of *Malfy*, where the tender Passion is so much the Mode, that scarce the extremest old Age can oblige our Ladies to leave it off. And for this very Behaviour was *Gigantilla* more taken notice of, than for the Charms of her Person and Conversation. The Lady with whom she liv'd, happening to mention her in the Presence of the Duke, he seem'd a little surpriz'd at such an Instance of Moderation in so young and gay a Person ; and whether her Reserve were owing to Discretion, or a peculiar Coldness of Constitution, thought the Conquest of a Heart which had in the midst of such a Number of Temptations continued its Inflexibility, worthy of his most strenuous Endeavours. He had several times seen her, had talked to her, and the more he reflected on her Charms, the more he thought it not beneath him to confess a Passion for her ; and from that moment

moment watched an Opportunity of meeting her alone, that he might communicate to her Proposals, which he imagin'd she wou'd accept, if not through the excitements of Love, through those of Duty and Interest, when made her by a Man of his Dignity, and her Sovereign. Fortune, whose Favourite for a long time *Gigantilla* continued, seem'd to be auspicious to the Duke's passionate Desires, and procured him a private Interview when he least expected it.

He went one Evening to walk in the Gardens belonging to his Palace, indulging Reflection either on the Affairs of State, or those of his Inclinations; several of the Nobility being there, at his approach withdrew, perceiving he made no signal to them to stay, and that he seem'd deep in Meditation: *Gigantilla* was in an alley at the further end with a young Courtier, one of those who most passionately affected her; they were sitting on a green Bank, but on sight of the Duke rose, and having made their obedience, were about to do as the rest had done. He suffer'd them to pass some Paces from him, but then, as if that moment recollecting himself of something he had to say, *Gigantilla*, (cry'd he) *Artemia* (for that was the name of the Lady to whom she now belong'd) has told me strange Stories of you: I must be inform'd of the Truth
from

from yourself. The Lover at these Words redoubled his speed till he was out of sight, and *Gigantilla*, tho' covered with Confusion, turn'd back, and with down-cast Eyes mov'd towards the Place where the Duke stood. What is the meaning, pretty Maid, (*resum'd he*) that I hear this Character of your Insensibility? Is the Court of *Malfy* so barren of *Beaux Esprits*, that *Gigantilla* can find nothing worthy her Regard? The Court of *Malfy*, my Lord! (*answer'd she, with a modest Assurance*) cannot but be the Scene of an entire Politeness, since even the meanest here are permitted to emulate the Example of their illustrious Sovereign, and most share his Favour when most they rival him in Virtue: with due Respect I consider the Merits of all; but it is not, alas! for a Maid of my low Station to be particular in declaring an Esteem for any one, lest I should incur the Displeasure of the rest. No, lovely *Gigantilla*, (*said the Duke*) tho' I doubt not but whenever you shall fix your Choice, a thousand must be undone; yet if they love sincerely, they neither ought, nor will repine at what makes your Felicity. I rather think, (*pursued he*) that 'tis not an Indifference for all, but a conceal'd Affection for one, unworthy of the Blessing, which maintains this Character of Insensibility. No, my Royal Lord, (*reply'd she, assuming an Air of haughtiness, which gave a double Lustre to*
her

her Charms) tho' meanly born, Souls come
 not by descent, nor cou'd that Passion, for-
 cible as it is esteem'd, prevail on mine, to
 approve what Reason did condemn. I yet
 have liv'd a Stranger to it, and am confi-
 dent shall ever do so, unless made acquaint-
 ed with it by Perfections, such as shou'd
 render the tender Flame my Glory, not my
 Shame. Love always gives desert, (*resum'd*
he) nor can we be possess'd of that Passion
 without imagining some Merit in the dar-
 ling Object: but admit I shou'd believe your
 Heart is yet a Virgin, of what sort of Charms
 must he be Master, who shall have the good
 fortune to please you? Is it to Wit, or
 Wealth, Grandeur, or Beauty, you wou'd
 be most inclinable to yield the Prize? This
 is a Point, (*answer'd she*) which I have hi-
 therto so little consider'd, that 'tis impossi-
 ble for me to give your Highness any di-
 rect Answer; yet sure I think that none of
 these, singly, wou'd tempt me to become a
 Lover: a needy Wit is more the Scorn than
 Envy of the World, and the rich Fool ne'er
 dignifies his Choice; Grandeur unmerited
 acquires the general Aversion, and Beauty
 is the least of manly Graces. I therefore
 conclude that Virtue, with a moderate
 share of each of these Perfections, is the
 only Charm to gain a Woman who has Dis-
 cretion for her Guide. I no longer won-
 der (*said the Duke*) at your Indifference, few
 Men

Men have all the Requisites you seem to wish: but tell me, (*pursued he, taking one of her Hands and gently pressing it between his*) shou'd you be lov'd by one who wanted some of those Excellencies, yet made it up in abundant Passion, and an unextinguishable Tenderness, wou'd not your Gratitude allow that as some Plea for Favour? I were ungenerous, indeed, my Lord! (*answer'd she*) not to reward as far as was in my power such Love; and if I cou'd not return in kind the Passion he bestow'd, he certainly shou'd have my Friendship and Esteem. Suppose myself the Man, (*rejoin'd the Duke*) in what manner might I hope you wou'd reward my Flame? At so unexpected a Demand the Face of *Gigantilla* was covered with a Scarlet Blush; Surprize and Joy at so unhop'd a Sacrifice to her Ambition, made her for some moments incapable of replying; but recollecting herself as soon as possible, she endeavoured to disguise the Pride she took under the Appearance of Confusion for a Grace she cou'd not pretend to merit; and casting her Eyes on the Ground, and making use of her utmost Efforts to withdraw the Hand he held; I beseech your Highness, (*said she*) mock not the Innocence of an artless Maid; I understand not the Gallantries of a Court, nor have the skill to answer as I ought — your Pardon, and Leave, Sir, to depart. — Not till I have convinced

convinced you (*reply'd the Duke*) how greatly in this Conjecture you injure your own Charms, and my Admiration of them; by Heaven, *Gigantilla*! I am in earnest when I say I love you; nor will I refuse any Proofs in my power to assure you of it.—Nay, (*continued he, perceiving she persisted in her Endeavours to get loose*) I must not suffer you to remove, till I have brought you not only to listen to my Suit at present, but also to promise me you will consent to hear it as often as the too frequent interrupting Cares of State will give me leave to entertain you with it. In speaking these words he drew her toward an Arbour, where making her sit by him, he omitted nothing that the humblest Lover wou'd have said, to give her all the Assurances she wanted, that she was, indeed, his first and greatest Wish.

You cannot but have heard that *Artemia*, the Lady from whom our *Gigantilla* had found so much favour, had long been Mistress of the Duke's Vows, and that by the consent of his States he was shortly to espouse her: this new Object of his Desires had need therefore of all her Cunning to manage an Affair so nice; she doubted not but that, if it were known, that she receiv'd an Address of this nature from the Duke, she shou'd lose all the Interest she had with that Lady, and in all probability be discarded from her House and Service; and if she shou'd be-

tray to her the Honour he had done her, she was not certain that she cou'd so far contain her jealous Rage, as not to upbraid him with it: this she thought wou'd bring infallible Ruin on herself with both; because whatever Obligations at present *Artemia* might think herself, under to her Fidelity, when married to the Duke, she neither cou'd, nor durst encourage a Person who had so highly offended him. She past the whole Night after she had parted from him in debating within herself in what manner she shou'd behave for her Safety and Interest: and being by the Duke's a thousand times repeated Vows, and the Offers he had made her, convinced that he was in good earnest charm'd with her; she resolv'd to make the best use of his Passion, while in its first Vigour, for the ruin of a Rival so formidable. After many Contrivances for that end, she at last pitched on one the most execrable sure, that Envy or Malice ever put into a Woman's Heart.

There was at that time in the Court of *Malfy* a young Nobleman of *Lacedemon*, call'd *Philamont*: He was accounted one of the most lovely Persons of the Age, and for his Wit and Conversation had but few Equals; he had a Humour extremely gay and entertaining, and an uncommon Complaisance in his Deportment, especially to the Fair. Such a Man cou'd not but be a very great
Favourite

(II)

Favourite with the Ladies; but tho' he treated all with the utmost Gallantry, his chief Court was made to *Artemia*, either because it was his Inclination so to do, or that being look'd on as the future Dutchess of *Malfy*, he thought it most her right. Her Character had been hitherto so clear, and her Thoughts so perfectly innocent, that as she was conscious of no Error in her Conduct, she imagin'd not there were People in the World base enough to lay any to her Charge; and receiv'd the Visits made her by the *Count* with the same freedom other Ladies of her acquaintance did, tho' with much less design than some of them. From this Acquaintance, and the Civilities she suffered him to pay her, did the ungrateful, the barbarous Partaker of her Bounties raise a Scheme for the utter Destruction of her Interest, her Glory, and her Peace of Mind.

In that Conversation she had with the enamour'd Duke in the Garden, she had promis'd him another the next Evening in the same place; and having fully contriv'd the horrid Stratagem, and consider'd what kind of Behaviour wou'd be most for the advantage of her Designs; she assum'd the utmost Tendernefs in her Voice, and Eyes, and without seeming to have lost any thing of her former Bashfulness; she affected to feel an innate Sensibility of the Passion he

C 2 profess'd,

profess'd, and with the Air of endeavouring to conceal a Softness she was ashamed of, discover'd it in a thousand Words, and Looks, which had the appearance of the most artless Innocence, but were in reality the produce of the deepest Deceit. She play'd her part with such admirable Artifice, that the Duke, while her imagin'd Love transported him, felt an Increase of Admiration for a Virtue which in spite of the soft Pleas of Inclination, and Excitements of Interest, cou'd support itself against the Temptations of the Man she lov'd, and in whose power it was, so much to gratify her Ambition.

The Offers he made her in the daily Interviews he afterwards had with her, were indeed such as might have subdued a Chastity more severe than hers ; but as it was to Principles far different from those which are inspir'd by Virtue, that she was indebted for the power of refusing his Temptations ; so those same Principles still forbade her compliance till she had secur'd the main Point she aimed at. The doating Passion with which she found he regarded her, flatter'd her sometimes with a View of becoming, what she afterwards was, Dutches of *Malfy* ; but if that Design prov'd abortive, she resolv'd at least to break off his intended Marriage with *Artemia*. She well knew that the Mistresses of Sovereign Princes are as conspicuous as the Stars, and as there was not

a possibility of being his, without the whole World being sensible of it, so it wou'd be look-on as the highest Ingratitude in her who had receiv'd so many Marks of favour from *Artemia* : Nor wou'd it have been consistent with Reason, to believe that Lady wou'd have endur'd a Rival in her Servant, the Creature of her Bounty. To prevent her therefore from the Power of acting any thing to her prejudice, she resolv'd, as I have already said, to be before-hand with her in Revenge, and work her Ruin, for the Security of her own Ambition.

The Plot which for this end she had long since laid, she began the Execution of, in a manner peculiarly subtle, and altogether like herself. One day as the Duke was pressing her for compliance, and renewing the Offers he had made her, she started from her Seat, and with an Air of as much disdain, as a Subject might assume in the presence of her Sovereign ; Forbear, I beseech your Highness, (*said she*) to talk to me in this manner,——think more nobly of the Passion you profess, than to believe it can be purchas'd.—— Ah Prince! a thousand times more lovely than you are great, be just to your own Merits, and know your Dukedom ; nay, were you Master of the World, and wou'd bestow it, all were but a trifling Present to a Soul like mine, rap'd in Reflection of more substantial Blessings : —in
this

this I boast myself worthy of your Love, in that I know the value of it; and tho' my Virtue forbids me to accept it in the way I can alone hope to enjoy it; yet do I think the Offer too great a Glory to suffer the Idea of any meaner Object to sully the brightness your Esteem has given me. You will easily believe the Duke, charm'd as he was with this Declaration of her Love, spar'd no pains to oblige her to recede from the Severity of a Virtue so prejudicial to his Hopes; but the more he endeavour'd to persuade, the more resolute she seem'd, till his impatient Passion making him tell her that he cou'd no longer flatter himself with a belief she had the least Inclination for his Person; she answer'd, as if without considering what she said, I wish to Heaven for your future Peace and Honour, that you were with the same Sincerity and Ardency ador'd by those from whom you most deserve it.——Not love you, cruel Prince! (*pursued she, bursting into a Flood of well-counterfeited Tears*) what but the extremest Tenderness cou'd enforce my Tongue to such a Declaration? ——But that is but one of the many Proofs I daily give of the most pure Affection that ever fill'd a Virgin's Heart.——Demand of *Artemia* what my Thoughts are of you, when but last Night she chid me from her Presence, and threatened to turn me for ever from her House
and

and Favour. *Artemia!* (*cry'd the Duke, strangely surpriz'd, as imagining by her Words, that she had given that Lady some suspicion of their Conversation*) knows she aught of my Passion, or the Privilege you allow me to avow it? What has my Rashness utter'd! (*resum'd she.*) No, my Lord, you cannot sure believe me guilty of such Imprudence;—but I beseech you question me no farther, —I have already spoke more than becomes me—think of it no more, I conjure you, for your own Peace, than which to me my Life is less dear.

There is in Human Nature so great a propensity to enquire into things forbidden, even in the most trivial Affairs, that you will not wonder the Duke's Curiosity shou'd be inflam'd at these ambiguous Words in a matter of such consequence: He told *Gigantilla* that he must, and wou'd be inform'd the whole of her meaning; and when she still by Tears, added to Entreaties, seem'd to dissuade him from any further search, his Impatience grew beyond all Bounds, and forgetting the Lover, resum'd the Sovereign, and commanded her to unfold at full the Riddle. Oh hard Condition! (*cry'd she, in a seeming Agony of Soul*) that I so much oblig'd, must be so much ungrateful! ———Oh *Artemia!* unhappy in thy Confidence, but more unhappy *Gigantilla*, compell'd to betray that Confidence! ———You know, dread Sir,
how

how greatly I am indebted to that Lady's Bounty——shall her Undoing then arrive thro' me!——shall her Compassion to me become fatal to herself?——And yet 'tis so ordain'd by Heaven, and by that Duty which is not to be dispens'd with to my Prince;——but spare my Tongue a Tale so painful.——This Letter (*continued she, plucking one out of her Pocket*) may perhaps inform you of all that I can speak.

The Duke made no reply to these words, but taking the Paper hastily out of her hand, broke the Seal, and found the Contents of it as follows.

To Count PHILEMONT.

“**Y**OU complain of me without cause,
 “ and must be very unjust to your own
 “ Merits, if you believe I wou'd omit any
 “ Opportunity of testifying how dear they
 “ are to me;—but you know the Eyes of the
 “ whole Court are on me.—Those fatal Ties
 “ by which I shortly must be bound, makes
 “ me be consider'd already as Dutcheſs of
 “ *Malſy*, and compels me to receive the un-
 “ welcome Homage of every petty Courtier;
 “ —— with equal Ardency I languish for
 “ the Bleſſing of your Love, long to indulge
 “ in privacy all the ſoft Wiſhes of my Soul,
 “ and give a looſe to Tranſports, ſuch as
 “ only can be known in the Embraces of
 “ my

“ my charming Count. *Gigantilla*, as much
 “ an Enemy as her scrupulous Virtue is to
 “ our Passion, will, after her fullen way, in-
 “ form you of the Inquietudes I last Night
 “ sustain’d.—I dream’d, my dear *Philemont* !
 “ that as I was flying to meet your out-
 “ stretch’d Arms, an unseen Hand snatch’d
 “ you away, and in your place a black and
 “ dreadful Vapour rose from the Earth, ob-
 “ scur’d the Sky, and darkned all around :
 “ ———good Heaven avert the Omen ;——
 “ but whatever Fate shall decree, the Mis-
 “ chief must be sudden if it prevents us
 “ from once more revelling in the Joys of
 “ Love ;— this Night I hope to make my-
 “ self reparation for the Terrors of the last.
 “ ---Avoid therefore all other Engagements ;
 “ my faithful *Gigantilla* shall give you no-
 “ tice of the Hour in which you may se-
 “ curely steal to the Bed and Arms of

Your most Passionate, and

Tenderly Devoted

A R T E M I A.

Gigantilla had so exactly counterfeited *Ar-*
temia’s Hand in this horrid Aspersions on her
 Honour, that it was impossible for it to be
 known for any thing but what it represen-

D

ted ;

ted ; and the fair Incendiary observing, with her utmost penetration, the Duke's Countenance while he was reading, perceiv'd to her very great Satisfaction only such Changes as were occasion'd by his Surprise, and nothing that look'd like a suspicion of the Truth. The chief Reason of this was, that his present Passion for *Gigantilla* having rendered the Charms of *Artemia* indifferent to him, he was not greatly troubled at so justifiable a Cause of breaking off with her ; but as there is something in nature which cannot brook the name of Rival, he express'd the utmost Indignation against *Philemont* ; and having ask'd *Gigantilla* many Questions concerning the Times and Places of their Meetings, to all which she had prepar'd herself with Answers suitable to her purpose ; he vow'd the severest Revenge : He was about to go that moment and upbraid the Inconstancy and Falshood of *Artemia* ; but *Gigantilla* falling on her Knees, prevented his Design : If the Advice of a silly Maid (*said she*) might not be too presuming, I wou'd beg leave to remind your Highness, that this is not the way to convince the World how greatly your Royal Favours have been injur'd by the ungrateful *Artemia* ; she doubtless will deny all I have reveal'd, forswear this Letter, tho' written by her own hand, and I alone shall be esteem'd the guilty Person.—— No, my Lord, let full Detection glare

glare her in the Face, and prove your Justice in whatever Punishment you shall decree for her Ingratitude, and the Inhospitallity of the Count : — — this Night he is to be admitted into her Apartment ; your Highness may immediately follow, and ocular Demonstration remove all present Doubts, and future Remorse. The Duke was charm'd with the Counsel she gave him, and raising her from the ground, assur'd her he wou'd comply with it. There past between them little more at that time ; it being near the hour in which the Duke usually supp'd, he adjourn'd to the Presence-Chamber, where the Nobility attended his approach ; and the treacherous *Gigantilla* having proceeded with so much success in her Design, retired to her Closet to ruminate on the Event, and by what Method she should accomplish the execution of it.

I had forgot to inform you, that it being agreed, according to the advice of *Gigantilla*, that the Duke shou'd surprize together the suppos'd guilty Pair ; the Letter of appointment being broke open, some difficulty appear'd at first how to proceed ; but our subtle Contriver soon remov'd it, by telling the Duke that she had frequently been the Bearer of such Messages, when time permitted not the means of writing, and that she wou'd acquaint the *Count* with the Intentions of her Lady by word of mouth.

In this last Article did she speak truth ; after having deliberated some time, she sent a Page belonging to *Artemia*, to let the Count know she desir'd a moment's private conference with him. He was surpriz'd at the Message, but being the most complaisant Man on earth, immediately obey'd the Summons. I will not ask pardon, my Lord ! (*said she, with a Smile*) what I have to tell you, will I am satisfy'd be a sufficient excuse for my Presumption in sending for you. The Commands of the Fair, (*answer'd he*) honour those on whom they are laid, and he that wou'd not readily obey those of the amiable *Gigantilla*, must be strangely unpolite as well as insensible. Those of *Artemia* (*resum'd she*) you shou'd have said; since without a Commission from that Lady, I shou'd not have taken this liberty with Count *Philemont*. *Artemia*, (*interrupted he, in a surprise*) does Fortune favour me so far as to make my Services of any kind acceptable to that Lady? You cannot be so ignorant of your own Deserts, my Lord ! (*reply'd she*) as not to know they must be acceptable wherever you wish they shou'd ;——but I will not detain you in a painful suspense : *Artemia* is not of a humour to be ungrateful for the extraordinary Devoirs with which you have particulariz'd her from all the Ladies of the Court, and will this Night return you thanks in the most grateful manner in her power.

power. — I will not ask if you are disengag'd, for I am confident you can have no appointments of that consequence to excuse your breach of Complaisance to a Lady of *Artemia's* Quality and Beauty. Never was astonishment superior to that the *Count* was in at such a Message from a Woman of *Artemia's* reputed Virtue; either his natural Gallantry, however, or a particular Inclination for her, made him extremely transported, and as he knew *Gigantilla* to be the Partner of her most secret Thoughts; he wondered not that she should be the Person made choice of to inform him of them: and being far from suspecting the sincerity of this Confidante, or the truth of what she told him, exerted his utmost Wit to return an answer to the obliging Fair, such as he thought wou'd be most pleasing to her, and testify the Gratitude and Rapture of his Soul for so unhop'd, so unmerited a Condescension. *Gigantilla* assur'd him she wou'd faithfully report all he said, and receiv'd a Diamond of great Value from him in recompence of her good Offices. Twelve a-clock was the Hour appointed for his coming to the Apartment; where all the other Servants being to be dismiss'd, he was to be admitted by *Gigantilla*.

But the Ruin of *Artemia* was not the only Aim of this Deceiver; she had a particular Spleen to the *Count*, he having declar'd in
some

some Company, who had inform'd her of it, that he thought her far from handsome, and was amaz'd to hear so many Gentlemen, infinitely her Superiors, had thought her worthy their Addresses. More to incense the Duke against him, therefore, she contriv'd to make that deluded Prince consider him as doubly his Rival: she perceiv'd that he intended only to make a Breach with *Artemia*, and express'd not that Indignation against the *Count*, which was necessary to hurry him to his Destruction. But not doubting if his Displeasure wou'd be extreme, cou'd he be brought to believe he had a Design on herself; she prevail'd on him to be conceal'd in a little Room near one which the *Count* must pass, in his way to the Chamber of *Artemia*: She took care to place him there some moments before the Hour in which she had appointed *Philemont*; and that unhappy Gentleman being punctual to the time, and admitted by the suppos'd Confidante; she told him, that *Artemia* cou'd not possibly get rid of a Lady who was with her. Can you have patience, my Lord, (*said she*) to pass a few moments with me, till the Mistress of your Devoirs shall be at leisure to receive you? She spoke this with such an Air of Tenderness and Languishment, that the *Count* had reason to imagine she was as much charm'd with him as she had told him *Artemia* was; and being a Man of great Gallantry, and
 thinking

thinking it also unsafe to disoblige her, said a thousand fine things to her on her Wit and Beauty, which, to carry on her Design she seem'd readily to believe, and made such advances, that he cou'd not, without plainly confessing he had but deceiv'd her in his former Expressions, avoid treating her in the manner of a Lover: and perceiving that she no more mentioned *Artemia*, nor offer'd to go into her Chamber to see if she was yet disengag'd, he began to suspect she had but invented that Story on purpose to have an Opportunity of entertaining him herself in private. Having once harbour'd this thought, by what I have said of her Charms and his Disposition, you will not wonder that he soon resolv'd not to disappoint so obliging a Design, and accordingly proceeded to Freedoms, which wanted not much of depriving the enamour'd Duke of his chief Aim: but this was not the intention of *Gigantilla*, she suffer'd him to go on just as far as was necessary to work him to her purpose, but no farther; and when she found his Inclinations rais'd to the height she wish'd, then did she cry, For Heaven's sake, my Lord! if you must divert yourself with raillying a poor Maid, let us talk in the next Room,——— this is open to the Gallery, and if any of the Servants chance to come that way, our Discourse may be over-heard. In speaking these words she push'd open a Door, and going
in,

in, was immediately follow'd by the *Count*. A Couch being there, he attempted to throw her on it, but she had now gain'd her Ends, and repulsing him with all her might; Fye, fye, my Lord! (*said she, with a Voice quite chang'd from that softness she had assum'd to allure him*) reserve this prodigious Vigour for the longing *Artemia*, who, I am certain, by this time expects you; ——— but I will go, and presently return to you with the certainty. She waited not for his reply, but flew out of the Room with too much speed for him to have prevented her, if the confusion of his Thoughts at so sudden an alteration in her Behaviour wou'd have given him leave to have attempted it.

But to make this Part of her Conduct more plain to you, I must inform you that the Room in which she left *Count Philemont* was parted from that in which she had plac'd the Duke, but by a thin Wainscot, who hearing what pass'd between them, was not only convinc'd of the truth of what she had related concerning *Artemia*; but also that the amorous Inclinations of this young Nobleman, extended to rival him also with *Gigantilla*. Scarce cou'd he forbear rushing out that moment, and executing his Revenge; but his Desires of detecting the imagin'd Falshood of *Artemia*, and the Consideration that tho' the Opportunity of ridding himself of so hated a Rival, were delay'd, it wou'd

wou'd not be lost, put a stop to those Emotions; and he contented himself to remain in his Concealment a few moments longer.

Gigantilla soon return'd, and put them both out of the pain of suspense. *Artemia*, my Lord! (*said she*) is now alone, and thinks each moment of your absence a tedious Age. Conduct me to her then, (*reply'd he*) thou teizing, obliging, ingenuous Surprizer. She cou'd not hinder him from throwing his Arms about her waist, and giving her three or four strenuous Embraces, as he mov'd forward; but disingaging herself from him as soon as possible, she bid him follow her, which he doing, she led him through several Rooms, and being come into that which was *Artemia's* Bed-chamber, she told him her Orders were to leave him there, and that he wou'd immediately be blest with the sight of her he came to visit: but (*added she*) her Modesty will not permit her to see you in the presence of any one. Farewel, may all the Happiness you deserve attend you. She spoke no more, but going out of the Room, shut the Door after her, where she stood listening attentively till she heard *Artemia* come in, which she knew wou'd be immediately, because that Lady was but in her Closet at her Devotions, as was her Custom, before she went to bed.

The Surprize of that innocent Lady, when at her entrance she beheld the *Count* in her Chamber,

Chamber, is not to be express'd: My Lord! (*said she*) how happens it that I find you here? — Is this a fit Hour or Place to visit a Maid of Quality? The Behaviour of *Gigantilla* having made him know that Women sometimes put on Airs very different from their Inclinations, he little regarded what he imagin'd but a seeming Coyness; and taking her Hand, (which in the present Confusion of her Thoughts she cou'd not refuse him) and eagerly kissing it, Any time or place (*said he*) is blest, that gives me the Opportunity of telling the Divine *Artemia* how much I am her Slave: — but come, my Angel, consider how few our Fate allows, and lose not any part of this by an affected Coldness. — Thus, (*added he, taking her in his Arms*) thus let me banish all disturbing Scruples; thus prove the Vigour of my Passion, and awaken thine. Off, base presuming Man! (*cry'd she, by this time a little recover'd from that Amazement his Presence and Behaviour had involv'd her in*) and be assur'd I will not tamely brook Affronts like these; for 'tis not possible that any Act of mine cou'd give you cause to think such Treatment wou'd be welcome to me. The virtuous Indignation which sparkled in her Eyes, and diffus'd itself through all her Air as she was speaking, gave a sudden Check to the boldness of the *Count*; he stood for a moment thunder-struck, and not able to

account

account for what he had heard, or what he saw ; at last, regarding her with a fix'd Attention, Did I not, Madam, (*said he*) attend you by your own Command? No, by Heaven, (*answer'd she*) and if you have been impos'd on into such a Belief, the only means to make me think you less guilty than at first you seem'd, is to quit me this instant.

— I will at a more convenient Season hear your Excuses, and the Reasons which have prompted you to such a vain and ridiculous Attempt. Drive me not hence, I conjure you, (*resum'd he*) till I have unfolded the whole Mystery. With these Words he fell on his Knees, and was beginning to relate what had pass'd between him and *Gigantilla*, when the Duke, with his Sword drawn, accompany'd by that Inventress of Mischief, rush'd into the Room ; Villain, (*cry'd the incens'd Prince*) receive the just Reward of Treachery and Inhospitality. He flew on him with so much fatal speed, that he had neither time to reply, nor put himself in a Posture of Defence ; but the Duke's Sword having pierced his Heart, he fell immediately dead at the Feet of *Artemia*. The Horror with which she beheld this Deed, gave her liberty to say no more than, Murder ! dreadful, undeserved Murder ! And with those words fell into a Swoon on the Body of the Deceas'd. A little silver Bell standing on the Table, *Gigantilla* took it up, and rung

with all her might : on which the Chamber was presently full of Women, and Pages belonging to *Artemia* ; the former ran to their Lady, convey'd her to the Bed, where having laid her, they began to apply proper Remedies for her Recovery ; and one of the others, by the Duke's Command, ran to call some of the Guards, whom in his present Fury he commanded to throw the dead Body of the *Count* out of the Window : which being done, he withdrew with *Gigantilla*, leaving *Artemia* to the Care of those about her.

Tho' the Heart of this cruel Woman exulted with the highest Pleasure at the Success of her Plots ; yet did her Eyes rain Tears, and her Breast heave with well-dissembled Sighs of Pity, for an Event which she easily deceiv'd the Duke into a Belief, was unexpected by her. Oh ! cou'd I have thought your Highness (*said she*) wou'd so far have given the Reins to Passion, not all the Duty nor the Interest I take in your Honour and Reputation, shou'd have prevail'd on me to have betray'd to you the Secret ! —— Unhappy *Count* ! (*continued she*) was thy compliance with the Love of a fine Woman a Crime worthy of Death ? To come into my Palace, (*answer'd the Duke*) and seduce the Virtue of a Woman about to be made mine, by the most solemn Engagements, was a Presumption which merited a

Fate

Fate less glorious than the Death he has receiv'd: Yet so well am I pleas'd to be deliver'd from those Engagements, that I know not but the means he afforded me of being so, might have prevail'd on me to spare his Life, had he not attempted to wrong me in a Point more tender: had his Desires been confin'd to *Artemia*, I shou'd perhaps have let them liv'd, and lov'd, and indulg'd in Infamy; but satiated with her less potent Charms, he sought to undo me in my *Gigantilla*.——By Heaven, for each Embrace he forc'd from thee I wou'd have had a Life, and regret nothing but my want of Power to inspire him with new Breath, that I might make him feel again the Pains of Death. These Speeches, as well as the Action, which had occasion'd them, letting her see the power she had over him, she no longer doubted if she shou'd be able to influence him to every thing her insatiable Ambition aimed at; and having made the best of her Observations on the less artful of her Sex, and finding that nothing so soon palls the Appetite of a Lover, as too readily yielding to his Desires, she intreated the Duke's permission to retire. He wou'd fain have perswaded her to crown his Love that Night; but she without seeming absolutely to refuse him, begg'd he wou'd make no mention of that tender Passion at a time when her whole Thoughts were taken up
with

with the dreadful Spectacle she was just come from being witness of; besides, (*pursued she*) shou'd it be known I have the honour of your Highness's Affection, all I have said might be esteem'd the Effect of Jealousy or Envy: I beseech you therefore conceal that Regard, which is my highest Blessing, for a time. *Artemia* has many Friends, when once the hurry of her Accusation and Detection is over, it will be more consistent with yours, as well as my Reputation, to acknowledge the Honour you do me. By these and such like Reasonings, he was at last prevail'd on; and it not being proper for her to return to the Apartment of the injur'd *Artemia*, she was allotted one at present little superior to her Condition.

It wou'd be altogether impossible for me to represent, as really it was, the state of that wrong'd Lady, when at her recovery from her Swoon, she was inform'd by some of her Servants, who observ'd the Duke and *Gigantilla* quit the Chamber together, and heard by some Words that past between them, that it was by that ungrateful Woman she had been accus'd; and that *Philemont* had been but the Tool made use of to work his own Destruction and her Shame. But depending on her Innocence, she sent to intreat the liberty of speaking to the Duke; but that was not only deny'd her, but deny'd her also in such a manner, as
left

left her no room to hope she retain'd any place in his Affections ; she had long look'd on him as her future Husband, had accustomed herself to think on him with all the Tenderneſs of the moſt virtuous Wife, and to be now thrown off, rejected, hated by him, was ſufficient to have broke a Heart leſs endued with Fortitude than was hers. Early in the Morning ſhe ſummon'd all her Friends about her, and proteſting to them her Innocence, begg'd they wou'd omit nothing which might let the Duke ſee his Error : She had all the time of her living at Court behav'd with ſo much Prudence, a Conduct ſo becoming her Dignity, yet at the ſame time ſo obliging and condeſcending to all, that few there were who believ'd her guilty. But when in answer to what they alledg'd in her defence, the Duke declar'd that he had heard the *Count* and *Gigantilla* talk to each other in the manner already related, they were put extremely to a ſtand ; ſome among them, however, had Courage enough to own they continued in their firſt Belief, and that what had reach'd his Highneſs's Ears, had been no more than a Plot laid between the Deceas'd and *Gigantilla* ; and as he was paſt the power of answering ſuch Doubts, mov'd that ſhe might by Tortures be compell'd to confeſs the Truth. But this putting the Duke beyond all patience, he commanded on pain
of

of his Displeasure, that it shou'd no more be mention'd; and to convince them, as he said, how just his Accusations were, produc'd that Letter which *Gigantilla* had forg'd, and put into his Hands, as the first step she took in bringing about this execrable Treason. Whatever were their Thoughts, none after this durst utter any thing in opposition to his Commands; but when *Artemia* was inform'd of it, having no more to fear, she wou'd not be with-held, but ran to the Duke's Apartment: The Guards, tho' order'd not to suffer her to pass, in vain oppos'd her; resolute, and half distracted with her Grievs and Wrongs, she press'd to his Presence; and tho' encompass'd with the Nobility, fell on her Knees, and conjur'd him to do her Justice: If want of Beauty, (*said she*) or any other Charm, renders me unworthy to retain that Heart you once devoted to me, proclaim the Cause, but deprive me not of a Woman's chiefest Glory, my Reputation! Allow me Virtuous, and let me be esteem'd guilty of all other Defects.——By Heaven, that Scroll which has traduc'd my Fame, is forg'd! I never wrote to Count *Philemont*, nor had a thought of him or any other Man, but what without a blush I dare avow.——She wou'd have proceeded further, but the Duke wou'd not hear her; and by his command, some who were present, perform'd the unwilling

Office of forcing her from the place. Soon after she receiv'd an order to quit the Palace on pain of death, which her Friends, trembling for her Fate, compell'd her to obey. The Grief for such undeserved ill Treatment, threw her into a languishing Disease, but by the care and skill of the Physicians, her Body in process of time regain'd its former Strength, as did her Mind in some measure, of its Perturbations; enabled thereto by Heaven, and an innate Magnanimity and Bravery of Soul, rare to be found in a Person of her Sex: She no longer seem'd desirous of regaining the Duke's Affections, the Court, the World, and all the Pomp and Vanities of it were now below her consideration, her elevated Thoughts were bent on nobler Objects; she enter'd herself among the Priestesses of *Vesta*, and became an Honour to that Society of holy Virgins.

The wicked *Gigantilla* in the mean time triumph'd in her successful Wiles, and so strangely was the Duke infatuated with her Beauty, her dissembled Love, and well-feign'd Modesty and Virtue, that, contrary to the advice of his Council, the Entreaties of those who were most his Favourites, his own Interest and Glory, and every Motive which ought to sway a Prince, he married her, and from the meanest Rank of People

rais'd her to the supremest Dignity in his power to bestow.

These, dear Sir, were the means by which she became Dutches of *Malsy*, and having arriv'd at that envy'd height, one wou'd think she might have been entirely free from care, and have sat down content in the possession of all she had to wish; but 'tis certain, that Power ill gotten entails on the Possessor posses'd of it, Agonies more severe, more poinant than humble Virrue can be capable of feeling, tho' plung'd in all the Ills that Fortune can inflict. She had indeed no more to wish, where-ever she turn'd her Eyes, she cou'd see nothing above herself, a thousand Knees were bent whenever she approached, a thousand Tongues were continually chanting forth her Praises; she had every thing which cou'd gratify a proud, an avaricious, or ambitious Mind; yet all was not sufficient to give perfect Satisfaction, the Fears of losing what by such indirect Means she had acquir'd, empoison'd all the Felicities of her Life; she knew all the homage she receiv'd, all the seeming regard with which she was flattered, was paid only to the *Dutches*, and that *Gigantilla* of herself was the Object of Derestation to all the Virtuons and the Wise. She was not insensible, that high as she stood in the Duke's Love and Esteem, there were some who dar'd

to

to speak what their Thoughts were of her, and that the very Populace murmured at her sudden and unmerited Exaltation; and she knew not how far Parties might be rais'd against her, to the utter ruin of that State she had become so guilty to acquire: she therefore had her Spies perpetually on the watch to bring her Account of what was said concerning her; and being inform'd of many things which were not very pleasing to her, her Brains were for ever at work contriving Means to prevent her own undoing, and turn it on the Heads which intended it for her.

But the Person whom she most feared and hated, was Prince *Theanor*, Brother to the Duke; he had refused being present at the Solemnity of her Marriage with him, had oppos'd her in the promotion of some of her Favourites, who she had attempted to put into Posts of Honour and Trust; in fine, his Soul sincerely abhorring a Creature whom he knew so vile, and thinking himself above being prejudiced, by declaring his Sentiments; he omitted no opportunity of letting both herself and all the World know them, which he cou'd take, without at the same time affronting his Brother.

Never was a Character more eminently adorn'd with all good Qualities than that of this young Prince; often has his Coun-

sels blest the Land with Peace, when *Malfy* was threatned with the worst of Ills, cruel intestine Broils; and when justly provoked to Foreign Wars, his Actions shamed the Heroes of Antiquity by superior Courage, Conduct, and all that can compleat the General and the Soldier. To make these Perfections more illustrious, he has the most lovely Person in the World, a Mien and Air, which, while it commands the utmost Reverence, attracts also the tenderest Regards; a Generosity and Affability which cannot fail of engaging the Heart, and so liberal a Beneficence to all who stand in need of his Assistance, that he may well be stiled the Patron of the Poor, and Guardian-Angel of the Afflicted; never was a Prince more lov'd, more ador'd by the Populace, more revered by the Great and Good, and more dreaded by the Wicked.

Well then might the designing Dutchesse stand in awe of a Virtue so averse to her base Practices; but as he was Brother to the Duke, and in case he died without Issue, undoubted Heir of *Malfy*, she durst not openly avow her Hatred, but those Artifices which had hitherto so much befriended her, enabled her now to lessen this young Prince in the Opinion of his Brother; she made his most disinterested Actions appear mean Designings, and his very Virtues, Vi-
ces.

ces. That Sweetness of Disposition with which he receiv'd all those who address'd him, and that Zeal with which he prefer'd their Petitions, she represented as the Effects of his Popularity, the Desire of Applause, and an unnatural Ambition of becoming too valuable to the People of *Malfy*, that his Brother might seem not so at all; and in fine, that he was not without some secret Cabal, who were taking Measures to obtain for him the Sovereignty before his time.

Every one knows how far the Jealousy of Power influences Princes, and how liable they are to entertain Suspicions of him, who by Right of Inheritance is the next in Succession. Our Duke was indeed of a truly virtuous and a noble Nature; but so subtle was *Gigantilla* in embittering it with the Poison of Distrust, and so absolute a Confidence did he place in that cruel Woman, that he was soon brought to diminish that tender Affection with which he had formerly regarded his Brother, and by degrees to look on him with Rival's Eyes. He no longer consulted him in Affairs of State, no more made him a Partner in his Pleasures, behav'd, when in his presence, with a caution which was but too visible to the injur'd Prince; but so great was his Spirit, that being conscious of no Action which cou'd merit such an Alteration, he wou'd

not

not demand the reason of it; being of the Opinion, that (to use an Expression of his own, when he was one day press'd by a great Lord to make use of some Endeavours to re-establish himself in his Brother's Favour) if he had done nothing, as he was sure he had not, to offend the Duke, he shou'd greatly offend his own Innocence, as well as Honour, to seem guilty by a fawning Submission. My *future* Actions, as my *past* have done, (*said he*) will justify me in a more noble manner than my Tongue can do. 'Tis for the Villain and the Traytor to gild his Crimes with Eloquence and the Pomp of Words; insinuating Smiles and Flattery is the Sycophant's study'd Art; *Theanor* will not stoop so low: In the time of Danger, when foreign Foes invade again our fertile Fields, or bold rebellious Subjects presume to call Sovereign Authority in question; then let me prove myself a Brother, and vindicate my Fame; at present I am content to be suspected.

Nothing cou'd so much have forwarded the malicious Designs of the Dutchess as this Behaviour of the Prince, which tho' in reality the Effect of an innate Bravery of Mind, she had the artifice to represent as the Overflowings of his Pride and Arrogance. He cannot (*said she*) be blind to your Displeasure, yet he regards it not; thinks himself

too great to inquire into the Cause, or confess the Justice of it. ——— *Malfy* already acknowledges two Sovereigns——or rather he is the Superior; content with the empty Title of Duke, you suffer him to parcel out your Power amongst those whom Promises of future Favour have made wholly devoted to him; ——— the glorious Prince! the brave, the gallant *Theanor*, is now the Cry of all your Subjects, who but in show confess Obedience to you, submitting in fact only to him. The Prince's Carriage still giving her Encouragement to talk in this manner, she continued to incense the Duke, till he at last gave into all she said, and to nip in the Bud whatever Designs that young Hero might have entertain'd. He receiv'd an Order to quit his Palace, and to make the Affront more stinging, as also to prevent the formation of any private Cabal; the Duke publish'd an Edict, that none shou'd be permitted to enter his Court, who on any score visited that of the Prince.

Severe as this Injunction was, *Theanor* obey'd it without murmuring or complaining, nor cou'd the utmost diligence of all those Spies the Dutchess employ'd, and kept in continual pay about him, bring her Intelligence of any thing which she cou'd report to his disadvantage. The Good feel not half the Pain when injur'd in the most poignant

poinant part, as did this malicious Woman, in not being able to find a blemish in this Prince's Conduct: Well may Envy be pictured feeding on her own Bowels; the spite which this Dutches had conceiv'd against the Virtues of *Theanor*, wanting the means of exercising itself as she wish'd on him, like a Cancer eat into her Heart, and prey'd upon her very Vitals. How justly does the Royal Poet and Prophet say, that *the wicked shall fear where no Fear is!* Having acquir'd the Title she possess'd, by means too indirect to expect a quiet Enjoyment of it; the very shadow of a Danger made her tremble, and conscious of her own Guilt, and the Innocence of the Person she persecuted, she was not one moment free from Apprehensions, that some day or other the Duke's Eyes might be open'd to see things as they in reality were; and was ready to burst with inward Spleen, that all the ill Treatment he receiv'd, had not the power to drive him to any Words or Actions which might justify that Displeasure she had infus'd into the Duke, or raise it to the pitch she desir'd, in order to compleat his Destruction. But how impossible is it for the most Wise to be at all times so circumspect, as never to be guilty of some unguarded Look or Word, which may bear two sorts of Constructions; or that those who are for ever on the watch
for

watch for Mischief, shou'd not at last find the means of bringing about some part of their wicked Designs.

Theanor had long been passionately in love with, and belov'd by *Amarantha*, a young Lady, whose Parents dying while she was an Infant, and leaving her the Heiress of a vast Estate, she became the Duke's Ward. Her extreme Modesty not permitting her to make known their Loves, while in the beginning, the ensuing Disagreement between the noble Brothers, left her no hope of obtaining the Consent of him who had the disposal of her; and for that reason their Conversation was maintained with all the Privacy imaginable. The Secret, however, reach'd the Ears of our industrious Dutches; that Page who was accusom'd to be entrusted with the Carriage of the Prince's Letters to that Lady, happening to be indispos'd, he unfortunately chose for his Emissary that very Person who had enter'd into his Service for no other reason than to be a Spy on his Actions. He no sooner had the Letter in his possession, than instead of carrying it as directed, he ran with it immediately to the Dutches, who breaking it open hastily, found it contain'd these Lines.

To the Ever-Lovely and most Adorable
 AMARANTHA.

“ I Was coming last Night to feast my
 “ Eyes with a view of those Perfections
 “ which are never absent from my Soul,
 “ but was disappointed by the News that
 “ *Nearchus* was with you.—— I know
 “ him to be so much a Creature of the
 “ Duke’s, and of a Disposition so malignant,
 “ that he wou’d not fail to have reported
 “ my Visit, with Constructions on it no way
 “ to the advantage of our Loves: — My
 “ cruel Brother has not the power to make
 “ me wretched, but by depriving me of the
 “ Blessing I sometimes enjoy in your hea-
 “ venly Society, and while, ignorant of my
 “ Happiness, he takes no measures to ruin
 “ me in that, despise his empty Rage: —
 “ satisfied with the divine Assurances you
 “ have given me, that you will be only
 “ mine; I wait with such Emotions as may
 “ only be compar’d to those which agitate
 “ the Minds of Martyrs for their Crown
 “ of Glory.—— With pure Desires I burn
 “ for the blest time when we shall be join’d,
 “ beyond the power of aught but Heaven
 “ to separate us.—— I hope to steal to-
 “ morrow Evening, unobserv’d, to your
 “ dear Apartment; be so good to let me
 “ know

“ know if you can get rid of those trou-
 “ bleſome Intruders, who ſo often have
 “ diſappointed the Hope of the moſt exqui-
 “ ſitely, amiable *Amarantha's*

Ever Faithful, and

Paſſionately Devoted Adorer,

THEANOR.

She had no ſooner peruſed this, than preſently bethinking herſelf what uſe ſhe ſhou'd make of it; ſhe ran with it to the Duke, and making him take particular notice of the Words, *when we ſhall be join'd beyond the power of aught but Heaven to ſeparate us*; inſinuated that the Prince was impatient for the Supremacy, and that it was greatly to be fear'd that he was not without ſome pernicious Deſign to compaſs it. She alſo expatiated on the Expreſſion of *cruel Brother*, and *deſpiſe his empty Rage*, with ſo much witty Malice, that the Duke, tho' naturally cool, was worked up into the extremeſt Paſſion; he talked of nothing but impriſoning the Prince, and was about to ſend his Orders for that purpoſe, when *Nearchus* came into the Room. He was not only a great Favourite with the Duke, but was alſo

so one of those, who endeavour'd by all manner of Submissions to make himself acceptable to the Dutcheſs. The Rage which appear'd in both their Countenances made him fearful he had offended in his entrance, and after a ſhort Apology, was preparing to withdraw, when the Duke calling him back, threw the Letter to him: There *Nearchus*, (*ſaid he*) read that! you are concern'd in it as well as we. That Paraſite having examin'd the Contents, return'd it with a low Obedience, and lifting up his Hands and Eyes to Heaven, in token of Amazement; Good God! (*cry'd he*) Is this the Stile of a Brother and a Subject? I wonder not that he ſhou'd fear to be discover'd in a Deſign, ſuch as a clandeſtine Marriage with a Woman whoſe vaſt Sums of Treafure might enable him to undertake Enterprizes of the higheſt nature; but think it my Glory to be hated by him for my Loyalty and firm Attachment to my undoubted Sovereign, whom Heaven long preſerve, in ſpite of all ill Men, and Schemes contriv'd in Hell.

There needed not this Exclamation to confirm the Duke and Dutcheſs in the Opinion they had of his Zeal for their Service. They enter'd with him into a very ſerious Conſultation in what manner the Conduct of the Prince ſhou'd be reſented; and it
was

was the Advice of this Favourite, that no open Punishment shou'd be inflicted on him, which he said wou'd so much exasperate the People, whose Darling he was, that a publick Rebellion might ensue: He therefore humbly offer'd that effectual Measures shou'd be taken to disappoint his Aim in *Amarantha*, and to seem not to have observed any other Misdemeanors in him, till some way shou'd be found out to lessen him in the Opinion of the Soldiery and Populace, he might be punish'd without hazard to the Peace of the Dukedom. This Counsel prevailing, it was agreed among them, that the Letter shou'd be seal'd up in the manner it was before, and deliver'd to *Amarantha*, by the Person to whose Charge it was entrusted; who was also to bring her Answer back, that they might have the Perusal of it before the Prince saw it, in case it was judg'd proper it shou'd reach his hands.

Nearchus taking upon him to make up the Letter, he did it in so artificial a manner, that none wou'd suspect it to have been open'd; and the Messenger being dispatch'd on his Errand, the Duke and Dutcheß wou'd not suffer him to leave them, till the answer shou'd arrive; passing the time of expectation only in Contrivances how to render these illustrious Lovers as unfortunate

nate as they now believ'd themselves the contrary.

The Emissary being return'd, he presented to the Duke a Letter which had been just put into his hands by *Amarantha*; after which being order'd to withdraw, *Nearchus*, by command, broke it open, and read aloud the following Lines.

To Prince THEANOR.

“ NEEDLESS wou'd it be to tell
 “ you how much I am disturbed at
 “ every thing that deprives me of your
 “ Company; you are too well acquainted
 “ with my Soul not to know yourself the on-
 “ ly Object of my Desires and Hopes; I will
 “ not say my Fears, because I am certain
 “ that such a Love as ours will one day
 “ meet with its Reward; and all those
 “ Clouds which now obscure our Joys, and
 “ threaten Ruin, blow away, and a whole
 “ Heaven of uninterrupted Happiness break
 “ out upon us.

“ Nothing can be more true, than that
 “ all Blessings have their alloy; I rejoice
 “ in that my Birth and Condition renders
 “ me in some measure not unworthy of
 “ your Regard; but then that everlasting
 “ crowd of Impertinents it obliges me to
 “ enter-

“ entertain, makes it sometimes a Curse,
 “ especially when by their troublesome So-
 “ ciety I am depriv’d of yours.

“ I shall feign myself indispos’d all day
 “ to-morrow, that I may avoid receiving
 “ any Company, and indulge Meditation
 “ on that innocent Felicity the wish’d-
 “ for Night, and my dear Prince will bring.
 “ ——— Good Heaven! cut short the time
 “ of meeting in this clandestine manner,
 “ and permit us to avow a Passion which
 “ for its purity might be an Example to
 “ the admiring World.— Farewel, most
 “ virtuous and most gallant Prince, ever
 “ dear to

Your Faithful,

and tenderly Affectionate

A M A R A N T H A:

Little being to be gather’d from this, be-
 side the knowledge that *Amarantha* was as
 much affected with the Passion of *Theanor*
 as he cou’d wish she was ; they concluded
 to send it to him, in order to make the
 Disappointment they intended him more
 grievous to be born. This Letter, there-
 fore, being carefully seal’d up, as was the
 other,

other, the Messenger was commanded to deliver it to the Prince.

A Consultation was afterward held among them, in what manner the Behaviour of *Theanor* shou'd be resent'd ; in which the Dutcheſs exerted all her Wit and Artifice : but *Nearchus*, tho' equally malicious, advis'd the Duke to ſmother his Indignation for a while, not thinking his Amour with a Lady a ſufficient Pretence for any extraordinary Punishment. This ſubtle Politician conſider'd, that ſhou'd any Sedition happen among the People, it might bring to light many things not to the credit of a Party, of which he himſelf was one of the Chief ; and therefore choſe like a Mole to work all underground, and rather undermine than face the Perſon he wou'd ruin. In fine, it was at laſt reſolv'd, that *Amarantha* ſhou'd be forbid admitting the Prince's Viſits, or receiving any Letters or Meſſages from him : this Stop in the Progreſs of his Paſſion they judg'd wou'd make him fly into ſome Extravagancies which might juſtify his Confinement, or whatever Sentence they ſhou'd work up the Rage of the Duke to paſs upon him.

Nearchus was the Perſon employ'd to deliver this Command to *Amarantha*, who whatever her thoughts were of it, ſeem'd to comply with a ready obedience ; but the
violent

violent Emotions with which the Bosom of *Theanor* swell'd, when he was inform'd of this unexpected Severity, may more easily be guess'd at than express'd: *Amarantha* not being forbid to keep the Injunction she had receiv'd a Secret, mention'd it in all Company, to the end that the Prince might hear of it, and by refraining from coming to her Apartment, prevent his cruel Foes from pleasing themselves in his Disappointment.

But this Precaution avail'd but little to the enrag'd *Theanor*, his Passion now grew beyond all Bounds; — his Love was a Point too nice to be touch'd upon, without making him forget all the Considerations both of Duty and Nature; — he no longer remembered that the Duke was his Sovereign, or his Brother; and became so far transported with his ill Usage, that he broke into Expressions which on a less Provocation wou'd have been unpardonable in the mouth of a Subject. All that he said was immediately reported, and the Contrivers of his Destruction had now the Satisfaction of an Excuse to deprive him of every Mark of Princely Dignity: in vain he storm'd, in vain he even threatned, in vain his Friends intreated he might be brought to the presence of the Duke, there to vindicate his Innocence, or be detected of the Crimes alledg'd against him: The implacable Dutches

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and that subtle Instrument of her Will, *Nearchus*, disappointed all the Measures that were taken for his Interest, and things were carry'd with so high a hand against him, and all who were suspected to be of his Party so much deprest and disabled to do him any service, that the whole Dukedom was in expectation when they shou'd hear of something worse befalling him.

But while Affairs were carrying on in this manner against the Prince, his Persecutors enjoy'd not a much greater share of Ease. The Dutchess, tho' a Stranger to that Passion which truly merits the Name of Love, was not insensible of Inclinations which turn'd to much the same effect. *Nearchus* was a Man perfectly well made, in the Pride of his Years, had a vast deal of natural Complaisance, and finding his account in acquiescing to all the Humours of the Dutchess, he became so very agreeable to her, that the Duke ceas'd to be so at all: he soon found the Sentiments he had inspir'd, and fail'd not to take advantage of them; but whether she was indebted, for the Devoirs he paid her, to the Charms of her Person or Power, you will better judge by the Sequel.

In fine, Sir, they commenc'd an Amour which gave birth to Schemes more destructive to the Peace and Interest of *Malfy*,
than

than the worst Enemies of the welfare of that Dukedom cou'd have contriv'd. *Thea-*
nor, with all the honest-minded of the Nobility, being excluded from all consultation in Affairs of State, and only such as were the Creatures of the Dutchess admitted, who imposing on the Duke's Belief, represented things only as it serv'd hers or their own Designs, and by that means brought to pass many, which amass'd to them and their Adherents, immense Sums of Money, to the great Injury, and almost Ruin not only of the common People, but also those of the better Sort; who either were not let into the Secret of their Measures, or were too honest to be concern'd in them.

Petitions for a Redress of these Grievances were continually given, but then it was into such Hands as took care they never shou'd come into the Duke's; who seeing all things through a false Light, and entirely ignorant of his Subjects Sufferings, lost great part of that tender Affection they formerly profess'd for him; and tho' in reality one of the best of Princes, and of Men, labour'd under the severest Reflections both as to his Government and natural Disposition. But this I need not say to you, who are so well acquainted with the World, and know how common, tho' unjust a thing it is, for a Sovereign to be thought an-

swerable for the Mismanagement of a bad Ministry.

'Tis more the business of a Romance, than a Narrative of true Facts, to expatiate on the Despair of Lovers, when interrupted by any intervening Accident in the Progress of their Passion ; I shall therefore omit any Description of those Anxieties with which the Minds of *Theanor* and *Amarantha* were agitated in this separation, and with as much brevity as possible go on with the History of *Gigantilla*.

She was now pretty well reveng'd of *Theanor* for the contempt with which he had treated her ; but the whole World being sensible of the Crimes she had been guilty of, knew herself the Object of a general Detestation ;—— she cou'd not pass without hearing the Curses of the People, and was more than once insulted as she was going into her Chariot : this made her apprehensive of some greater Mischief from the Rage of Persons to whom she had given such just Provocation, and her Life became a continued Series of Jealousies and Fears, especially when some Affairs, the repetition of which wou'd be too tedious to be inserted here, obliging the Duke to take a Journey to *Sicily*, she was likely to be left a Prey to the just Fury of those she had made her Enemies. The Duke, ignorant of her Crimes,

Crimes, was also so of her Danger, and therefore thought not of taking her with him; but she wou'd not be persuaded to stay behind him, and therefore feigning an excess of Tenderness, which she said wou'd not permit her to know an easy moment in absence from him; he was at last prevail'd on, notwithstanding the Inconvenience of it, to give leave she shou'd accompany him. She having still taken care to keep his Resentments warm against *Theanor* by some new Invention or other, Guardians of the State and of *Amarantha* were chose out from those whose interest it was most to be faithful to the Dutchess, to prevent his having any concern in the one, or obtaining a sight of the other.

Things being settled in this manner, the Duke and Dutchess set forward on their Journey; but now the time approach'd, which was ordain'd to show this haughty Woman there was a Power Supreme, which, when it pleas'd, cou'd put a stop to the further Progress of her pernicious Designs. The Duke, whose Love and Confidence she had so greatly abus'd, was seiz'd on the Road by a dangerous Distemper, from which not all the Skill of the Physicians availing to recover him, he died at a small Village some thirty Leagues distant from the Confines of *Malfy*, leaving *Gigantilla* now as void of Power as
 she

she had ever been of making a good use of it. Thus ended the Life of a Prince so eminent in all good Qualities, that had he not too much lov'd and trusted a faithless Wife, the utmost Malice of his Enemies cou'd have found nothing wherewith to asperse his Character. But to return, by this unexpected Blow, this wicked Woman at once depriv'd of all Means to forward ten thousand Schemes her prolifick Brain had form'd, and subjected to the just Censure and Vengeance of the injur'd World, knew not what Course to steer, and seem'd as it were Thunder-struck with the sudden shock. In this Dilemma let us leave her for a while, and see what Alterations were produc'd in *Malfy*.

The News no sooner reach'd this Court, than all things immediately wore another Face, *Theanor* had no longer a Power above him; he assum'd the Dignity to which he was born, to the general Satisfaction of all the Brave and Virtuous: One of the first Uses he made of his Power was to search the Cabinets of all those who had been the Creatures of the Dutchess; among the number, that of *Nearchus* was examin'd, where they found several Papers which brought the whole Contrivances of the Cabal to light, and plainly discover'd how the good Duke had been impos'd upon by that base
Woman

Woman and her vile Adherents. Among other Letters was one written by the Dutcheſs's own hand, immediately after the death of the Duke, and was brought to that Favourite by the ſame Courier, who came with the melancholly Intelligence to the States: the Contents of it run thus.

To my Ever Dear NEARCHUS.

“ I Need not tell you that the Duke is
 “ dead; I wiſh you are not made ac-
 “ quainted with it by Effects which I trem-
 “ ble to think on; but if you yet are ſafe
 “ from the Malice of our common Enemies,
 “ to prevent any future Apprehenſions of
 “ what they may do to you, as well as to
 “ ſatisfy the longing impatience of a Wo-
 “ man who loves you; diſpoſe of your
 “ Eſtate with all imaginable ſpeed, and
 “ having turn'd it into ready Money, re-
 “ pair to me. — I mention this, becauſe
 “ I wou'd not have *Theanor* reap any Ad-
 “ vantage by your flight; but if it cannot
 “ be done with ſafety, hazard nothing;
 “ bring only your dear ſelf. — You know
 “ I want not Treasures to ſupport us both,
 “ — and after the Condeſcenſions I
 “ have made, cannot doubt but that what-
 “ ever I am Miſtreſs of, is wholly devoted to
 you.

“ you.— Make haste to comfort me in
 “ my present Affliction ; you may be cer-
 “ tain *Malfy* is no more a Place for me ; I
 “ want your Advice how to proceed, and in
 “ what Kingdom it is best for me to take
 “ refuge from the Rage of the now powerful
 “ *Theanor*.—How happy, my lovely *Near-*
 “ *chus*, wou’d it be for us to be permitted
 “ to indulge our Passion free from all fears
 “ of jealous or impertinent Interruptions,
 “ did not the same Accident which allows
 “ that Liberty subject us to Dangers not
 “ less terrible than all we had to dread ;
 “ had our stolen Pleasures been discover’d.
 “ ———But I will no more alarm myself
 “ with Apprehensions which I hope are
 “ vain : in some other Region we may per-
 “ haps enjoy those Felicities together, which
 “ we are deny’d in *Malfy*.—Let then your
 “ Love and Gratitude be shown in the
 “ speed you make to the Arms of

Your Impatient, but

Most Faithful and

Passionately Affectionate

G I G A N T I L L A.

The

The new Duke and his Council had no sooner perused this, and the other Papers they had seiz'd in the Cabinet of *Nearchus*, than he was order'd to be brought before them, who having no other Plea to alledge in his defence, than that what he had done had been but in complaisance to the Will of a fair Lady who was then his Sovereign, they thought him beneath any other Revenge than that of confining him from leaving *Malfy*: they deprived him not of his Estate, but took from him the power of disposing of it; and let him know, that on the least hint that shou'd be given of his continuing any Correspondence with the Dutchess, it shou'd be all confiscated, and become part of the Duke's Revenue. He prostrated himself on the Earth in token of the lowest submission, and assur'd them by the most solemn Imprecations, that he wou'd obey the Injunction laid upon him in the strictest Sense: and more to engage Belief in this Particular, he, unask'd, reveal'd many secret Contrivances which had been hatch'd against the Interest of the State; the Truth of which they cou'd by no other means have known.

Thus did he, rather than forsake his Native Country, and forfeit a small Estate he had there, chuse to abandon in Distress a Woman who loved him, and who had given him the greatest Proofs of it. This indeed must be said in his excuse, that

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tho' her Treasures were more than sufficient for both, yet the Avarice and Inconstancy of her Temper made her Favour no Inheritance; and he cou'd not be certain, that after he had quitted all for her, he shou'd not be thrown off for the sake of some new and darling Favourite: In this last Suggestion, however, his Suspicions wrong'd her; she lov'd him with an infinity of Passion, and it may be suppos'd that she was inspir'd with this unusual Tenderness for a Person incapable of returning it, as a just Punishment for her so ill requiting the Love of one who had rais'd her to the most elevated Wish her Ambition cou'd desire, and who had never ceas'd to regard her with an Affection, the most deserving of her Sex wou'd have thought it their Happiness to reward.

Doating on him then in this violent degree, what became of her, when from other Hands, tho' not from his own, she receiv'd the History of his Ingratitude: She needed not this addition to her other Woes, she had already more than she was well able to sustain: She was so much the universal Hate, that it was owing only to the extravagant Expence she was daily at in Bribes, and procuring a number of Persons who serv'd as a Guard about her, that she was safe even in that Village where she had waited the approach of her ungrateful Lover; and to what other Place she shou'd have

have recourse, she knew not.—— The *Lacedemonians* detested her on the account of *Philemont*, whose death it was now well known hapned through her contrivance; the *Sicilians* abhorr'd her name, as looking on her as the only Blot of the Duke's Glory; and to *Malfy* she cou'd not hope to come, without receiving from the Justice of *Theanor* that Punishment her Crimes in general, exclusive of his particular Wrongs, had merited. All her Artifices, all her Policy now fail'd her, she was as incapable of doing service to herself, or hurt to others, as an Ideot; and in the midst of this Distress to receive the News of being forsaken by the Man on whom she alone depended for Counsel; the Man whom but to see wou'd have afforded some mitigation of her Misfortunes; was such a surcharge of Affliction, as she wanted Fortitude to bear: and nothing but the stings of Conscience reminding her how terrible a Judgment-Seat she must appear before in another World, cou'd have prevented her from leaving this, by means the most detestable to Nature.

All Obstacles being thus remov'd, the present Sovereign of *Malfy*, the brave and virtuous *Theanor* was married, with a Solemnity befitting his Love and Dignity, to the beautiful *Amarantha*, a worthy Ornament of the Regal Power: Never were a Pair more truly blest, or more deserving to

be so ; Heaven seems to have reserv'd its choicest Favours for their Heads, nor since their happy Union has one day past over without bringing some addition to the Felicity of their State. But as nothing more ennobles Power than Clemency, the most implacable of their Enemies have found no other Punishment than what the Shame of having offended them inflicts : even *Gigantilla* herself, tho' not out of the reach of Vengeance, seems to be forgotten ; they attempt nothing against her, set no Price upon her Head, nor publish any Edicts in her prejudice. She still continues where she was at the Decease of the Duke, but in the most forlorn, unfriended, and unpitied State ; not all her Riches being able to procure her one Moment's ease from the Racks of a guilty Thought, and an unavailing Passion for a Man, who affects to regret nothing so much as having had a Friendship for her.

Thus, Sir, have I given you as faithful an Account as possible, of the Rise and Fall of this once haughty Woman ; if it may afford you any Diversion, my Aim will be entirely fulfill'd, in proving how much I am,

S I R,

Yours, &c.

F I N I S.